

United States Patent [19]

Chang et al.

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[54] **APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING MULTIMEDIA MESSAGING BETWEEN DISPARATE MESSAGING PLATFORMS**

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

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The invention is an apparatus and method for receiving a message having a first format and for converting the message from the first format to a second format that is compatible for reception by a messaging interface having a destination address corresponding to an intended recipient. In the preferred embodiment, a computer system is used to receive and send messages between messaging interfaces and networks which may be dissimilar from each other. A variety of network interfaces is used to communicate with the networks and which may optionally have a first interface and a second interface for interfacing to a first and second network, respectively. The messages may optionally be presented through a web page. A forwarding program or equivalent may be used to forward subscriber messages to or from remote locations served by a remote computer system, enabling a messaging user to use the remote computer system as a local access point. A browser interface may be optionally used to control messages presented by the computer system on a real-time basis using hyperlink commands. The computer system may also be used in conjunction with: a recipient notification program or equivalent device that determines when a recipient is logged on to a network and if so, provides any messages stored in the recipient's mailbox to the recipient; a connection notification program or equivalent device that notifies the computer system that a recipient is logged on to a network so that the computer system can send messages stored in the recipient's mailbox, if any; and an apparatus and method for sending and receiving a destination address including Internet addresses using a DTMF generator such as a standard telephone keypad.

[73] Assignee: **Carmel Connection, Inc.**, Fremont, Calif.

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[52] U.S. Cl. **709/206; 709/207**

[58] Field of Search **709/207, 206**

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7 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets

